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Children's TV

Horoscopes/C-2 ■

Checkup/C-3 ■

TEMPO

■ Word game/C-4

■ Puzzles/C-7



Channel 8 said news reports of "boxer Mike Tyson being sentenced to 10 years for the rape of a black beauty pageant contestant" were educational to viewers 16 and under.



ABC said *Family Matters* (Channel 12) episode in which "Steve (Urkel) tutors

Despite FCC guidelines, stations have claimed everything from sitcoms to talk shows and cartoons as educational TV

THEY CALL THIS KIDS TV?

BY JOHN KIESEWETTER
The Cincinnati Enquirer

Would you call *Donahue*, *Oprah Winfrey*, *Roseanne* and cartoons starring Yogi Bear, He-Man and the Super Mario Brothers educational TV?

Cincinnati broadcasters have. An *Enquirer* inspection of children's programming reports compiled by Tri-State TV stations shows they have claimed such shows were educational — as many stations have done nationwide — to the dismay of children's TV activists and the Federal Communications Commission.

The FCC recently announced it plans to issue tougher guidelines for stations to fulfill the mandate to educate and inform viewers ages 16 and under, as required by the Children's Television Act of 1990.

Since the law became effective 18 months ago, little has changed, charges Rep. Edward Markey (D-Mass.). In a March 10 congressional hearing, he said TV stations are circumventing the law by declaring cartoons and sitcoms as educational TV — instead of finding innovative, new programs for children.

"The number of hours and time slots devoted to children's programming do not appear to have substantially changed (since the law)," says Barbara A. Kreisman, chief of the FCC's Video Services Division.

Kreisman, who has reviewed 320 TV



Channel 5 said two *Donahue* shows, 'Teenage Strippers and Their Moms,' and 'Parents Who Allow Their Teenagers to Have Sex at Home,' were educational for age 16 and under.



ABC said the first hour of last April's showing of *The Ten Commandments* (Channel 12) was educational for children 16 and under.

What the law says

The Children's Television Act of 1990 requires stations to:

■ Serve "the educational and informational needs of children" ages 16 and under "through the licensee's overall programming, including programming specifically designed to serve such needs."

■ Limit advertising in children's programming to 10½ minutes per hour on weekends, 12 minutes per hour on weekdays.

■ Compile quarterly children's programming reports and make them available for public inspection. Stations' broadcast license renewals are contingent on meeting the children's television law.

Adventures Of He-Man, Heathcliff and John Candy's *Camp Candy* as educational — but not *The Flintstones*, *Ducktales* or *Goof Troop*.

Channel 19, the city's top-rated station with young viewers, only lists one cartoon: *Captain Planet*, the environmental crusader. It has never claimed *G.I. Joe*, *Beetlejuice*, *Batman* or Fox cartoons were educational.

Kreisman says the network letters don't mean anything to the FCC. "They (stations) won't be able to defend a